

DARKEST RUSSIA

BY H. GRATTAN DONNELLY.

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CHAPTER VIII.—Continued.

"I warn you that your act, even if you accomplish your purpose, will do more injury to the cause of Russian liberty than any decree of the autocrat, however severe, could accomplish. Educate the people—"

"Bah! I have no patience with theories and theorists. This is no revolutionary kindergarten. We are men and women imperiling our lives in this movement, and I tell you that success can only be won by blood, by blood!"

A murmur—"Ay, that's the talk! Blood! blood! blood!" showed that the sentiments of the majority were in favor of the one who had last spoken.

"There is no precedent in history to prove that a people's wrongs were righted by assassination," began the first speaker. "You know, Oraminsky, that history—"

"History be damned—and precedents, too. We are here to make history—to establish a precedent if need be. No! no! Let the timid withdraw if they will. I, for one, will carry through our plan. What! Act as weaklings after all these years of waiting, after all these months of preparation, after all these weeks of work in silence and in secret to overthrow the tyrant! Never! by the God of the people of Holy Russia, never, never, never!"

Loris Oraminsky, the man who had last spoken, turned to those around him as he uttered the last words of his impassioned speech. He looked every inch a man who would dare—a man whom nothing could turn aside from a purpose once fully determined upon. The strongly marked face, with its heavy, square jaw; the deeply black eyes, sunken beneath shaggy eyebrows, and the massive head with its wealth of coal black hair, which was almost as luxuriant as a woman's—those, with a giant's frame and the strength of a Hercules, would have made Oraminsky a man of mark in any assemblage.

Of all the members of the moderates, none had opposed the extreme views and aims of Oraminsky and his following with greater zeal and earnestness than Ivan Barosky. The son of an exile—an exile as he believed cruelly and unjustly punished—Ivan was as intense in his enmity to the existing powers in Russia as was Oraminsky himself. But he was too able and far-seeing, too progressive and cautious to commit himself to what he truly believed to be a course of action that would alienate from the Russian revolutionists the support and sympathy of the friends of liberty in every country in Europe.

Oraminsky's impassioned reply, and the favor with which it had been received, convinced Ivan that further discussion would be futile.

"You have heard our views," he said, "and it is now for me to declare our purpose."

There was a pause. All looked at him with every appearance of intense interest.

"After this night," began Ivan, "we will never—"

He stopped suddenly. His ear caught on the outside the sound of a hurried footstep, and raising his hand for caution and silence he listened intently.

The footsteps grew nearer. Oraminsky lifted his hand, and as he did so a singular transformation took place.

All in the room who were seated, or who were working with the implements before described, arose and silently as so many specters stepped softly back toward the sides of the room. Each carried something—a battery, a bit of wire or shell, a conical vessel handled with great care and whose proximity was evidently not desired by any but the man whose duty it was to hold it in charge.

There they stood, lined by the walls, like so many automatons, silent, motionless.



"... BY BLOOD!"

All this had taken less time than it takes to write it. The footsteps stopped—there was a knock at the door.

A peculiar knock it was—a loud tap, two short quick taps, and then a pause and a final knock.

Evidently a signal for the expression of intense anxiety changed instantly to one of relief; the people resumed their seats, and Ivan, with a commanding gesture, which Oraminsky himself submitted to, exclaimed, "A friend! Open the door, Aronsky."

Ringing up the steps that led to the door of the underground apartment, Aronsky, removing a long oak-

on bar that fastened it, threw open the door.

"Ilda Barosky!"

The words were uttered with a spontaneous impulse by all present as Ilda Barosky, for it was she who had given the friendly signal, stood for a second at the door, until her eyes having lighted upon Ivan, she swiftly descended the steps and came into the midst of the expectant group.

Her face was flushed with excitement, her fine hair disheveled, and her whole appearance indicated that she was laboring under some intense mental strain.

Ivan sprang to her side. "Ilda, my sister, what has happened?"

Ilda gazed wildly for a moment, and then, her voice quivering with emotion, she spoke in quick, disjointed sentences: "Oh, infamy! Oh, cruel—coward—the lash—Alexis—I will be avenged—terribly avenged—do you hear? The cruel Nazimoff; oh, it was cowardly— and, overcome by the recollection of the terrible ordeal through which she has passed, the girl sank into a chair, burying her face in her hands, and shaking like an aspen leaf from the violence of the conflicting emotions.

After having recovered in some degree, Ilda told the story of the night. The sudden illness of Anna Doraki had deprived the famous orchestra of its great soloist, and at the last moment Anna appealed to Ilda to take her place. In vain Ilda urged that she had a reason for not going to the Nazimoff mansion, and it was only when the famous leader himself begged her, with his daughter, not to place him in a false position before the assembled aristocracy of the capital, that she gave a reluctant consent.

When Ilda reached the part of her story where she was brought by violence into the room, her audience manifested intense interest, and she proceeded amid deepest silence. But when she told of Nazimoff raising the whip, the indignation of all present could no longer be restrained.

"Coward!" "Wretch!" and "Woman beater!" were some of the maledictions hurled at Nazimoff, and threats, deep and earnest, of dire vengeance for the deed, were uttered on all sides.

But it was when she spoke of her refusal to play "God Save the Czar," and of her sending the violin crashing into a thousand pieces at the foot of Nazimoff, that the excitement broke all bounds.

"Death to the Nazimoff!" was one remark, and the refrain was taken up by all present.

"Let me avenge our sister's wrong," spoke up one young and powerful man who came into the group. "Give me the right and I shall find a way to his heart with this—" and he drove his dagger into the table and left it quivering in the wood.

"Not so! I am her brother," said Ivan, "and I am the one to avenge her."

"Well spoken," exclaimed Oraminsky. He saw that the feeling produced upon Ivan by the story of his sister was intense, and he determined to make the most of it to win Ivan as a supporter of his own. "But it must not be. This wrong has been done to the sister of a brother of our order—none the less a brother because he differs with us on some minor points. The vengeance for Ilda's wrongs belongs to us all, but we must be guided by our rules."

"Ay, by our rules," was the response. They knew the rules. It was not the first time that the rules had been invoked for private revenge.

Ivan had taken Ilda a little apart from the rest, and was doing what he could to restore her to calmness. He seemed anxious to gain every particular, even to the smallest and apparently most unimportant detail of what had occurred. But particularly was he concerned about Alexis Nazimoff.

"What did he look like? How did he act? What did he say?" with these and a score of other questions Ivan plied his sister, getting of course little or no information beyond what Ilda had told him at the beginning.

In the meantime, under the direction of Oraminsky, the assemblage began putting in operation the "rule of the order" to decide upon whom should fall the task of avenging Ilda's wrong by Count Nazimoff.

"Bring the bag, Hersy," said Oraminsky.

In response, one of the women produced a small bag made of chamois in which Oraminsky, after rapidly counting the number of persons present, placed a handful of roubles—exactly as many roubles as there were those in the apartment.

"And now for the Red Beauty!"

From around her neck, fastened by a string, Hersy produced a small leather case, which she opened.

The movement was watched with intense interest, and as Hersy drew from the case a coin and handed it to Oraminsky, all present gazed at the piece of money with some such expression as a Hindoo might regard an image of his favorite god.

The piece of money was a silver rouble.

It was a deep red.

"Le Rouble Rouge," sometimes called "The Red Beauty," was celebrated throughout Europe. It had been found by the side of the Czar Alexander II, when he sank in blood after the bomb had done its fatal work, and the red upon the coin was the

life-blood of the autocrat of all the Russians when he fell a victim to the Nihilists' vengeance.

"Now," said Oraminsky, "as he softly jingled the bag which contained the roubles, 'there are as many pieces here as we have brothers present. Plump! In goes the Red Beauty, and he who draws her wins the prize—he it shall be who must take revenge on the cowardly brute Nazimoff!'"

As he dropped the red rouble in with the rest, Oraminsky shook the bag and one by one the men approached and drew. Ivan took his chance with the rest.

"Keep your hands closed until I give the signal—then hold them aloft and show your coin," directed Oraminsky as he tossed the empty bag to Hersy, the last coin having been drawn.

"Now, then, one, two, three, show!" and all the hands went up.

"Ivan draws the prize!" was the



"OH, INFAMY!—OH, CRUEL!"

exclamation as it was seen that Ivan displayed the Red Beauty.

"Glad I am that it is so!" exclaimed Ivan. "I will wipe out Nazimoff's insult in a way that will show to all the world how a Russian can avenge a sister's injury. And now, friends," he went on, as he made a motion to Ilda to prepare to accompany him, "what is your last answer—the final reply to the leaders of our section? Will you defer action longer, or will you take issue with us and act alone?"

Oraminsky advanced. "Say to—" he spoke no further. Half a dozen hands went up at once with the signal for silence. Footsteps were again heard at a distance in the frosty night.

With a movement Ivan and Oraminsky both raised their hands.

The people in two rows ranged themselves along the walls. The footsteps grew nearer, louder, approached the door and stopped.

Then came a strong single knock—but no faint knocks followed. Evidently, whoever came to the door did not possess the signal.

Now it was that Ivan Barosky showed his powers—dominating even the strong will of Oraminsky himself. With a whispered word to Ilda, he pointed back to a dark corner behind the stairs in which was a scarcely visible door. "The secret passage to the banks of the Neva," he whispered "use it if necessary." Ilda disappeared.

Then, turning to Oraminsky, Ivan said in an undertone: "I am best to deal with this—is it so?"

Oraminsky nodded quickly. Then pressing Ivan's hand, with the word "Caution," he took his place by the wall and stood as impassive and as silent as the others.

Ivan alone now occupied the center of the room.

Again the knock—louder this time—two or three times louder.

"Open the door!"

Raising his left hand, Ivan made a simultaneous motion like that of a swimmer with both arms.

Ivan stood alone!

All the others disappeared as silently as so many shadows.

The room was empty!

(To be continued.)

His Name Was George.

"Funny thing happened this trip," said the sleeping car conductor. "Just as the porter was yelling 'First class for breakfast on the dining car!' a very fat, elderly, sober-faced, respectable old lady came jelling down the aisle, looking at the curtains that were still up in front of most of the berths, and at last stopping before me, she poked her umbrella at upper ten.

"Kitty!" she called, "where are you? Is that you up there?"

"There wasn't any answer, and the old lady got right mad. She beat a regular tattoo on the brass curtain rod and fairly yelled:

"'Kitty, Kitty! Get up right away! Why don't you answer me? It's time for you to get up, Kitty! Breakfast is ready. Kitty, Kitty, get up!'"

"Then the curtains of upper ten were pulled apart. A large red face, with long, black whiskers on the lower half of it, was poked out, and a deep, husky voice said:

"My name is George!"—Philadelphia Press.

Bertillon System Going Out.

The Bertillon system of measuring criminals is going out of date. The London police have found it unsatisfactory and experimented with a new system. It has proved successful, and is going to be adopted generally in England.

The Berlin police have inaugurated a card collection of impressions of the fingers for recognition purposes—a system which they call "Daktyloscopy."

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Let the Children Read and Remember the Immortal Document

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object, the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world:

He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature; a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time after such dissolutions to cause others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise; the state remaining, in the mean time, exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judicial powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislature.

He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined, with others (that is, with the lords and commons of Britain) to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation.

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us;

For protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states;

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world;

For imposing taxes on us without our consent;

For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury;

For transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offenses;

For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies;

For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering, fundamentally, the forms of our government;

For suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here by declaring us out of his protection, and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is, at this time, transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun, with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioner of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions, we have petitioned for redress, in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them, from time to time, of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them, by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace, friends.

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, Free and Independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that, as Free and Independent States, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which Independent States may of right do. And, for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

WANTED TO BE TEMPTED.

Bibulous Individual Wore White Ribbon With a Purpose.

Mrs. Robert J. Burdette, candidate for the presidency of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, was talking one day about the white ribbon that is the sign of total abstinence.

"There are some persons," said Mrs. Burdette, "who don't wear the white ribbon with sincerity. They wear it, perhaps, about as hypocritically as it was worn by an employe of a certain brewer."

"This employe, after years of disipation, appeared one day at the brewery with the white ribbon on his breast. Nothing was said to him, and he wore the ribbon for several months. Then, one day, the head of the firm, happening to notice the man's badge, approached him.

"Why, Frank, it is strange to see you, a brewer, wearing the white ribbon."

"It does look strange, sir," the man admitted.

"Well," said the brewer, "why do you do it?"

"It is like this," said the workman. "I wear the ribbon because it makes men like to tempt me, and, when I'm tempted, I succumb, sir."

HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIEND.

Sailor Nobly Surrendered Life Bit to His Captain.

Some time ago two fishing boats, or trawlers, came into collision off Start point, on the coast of Devonshire, England. They foundered, and the crew of one of the vessels was swept away while in the act of lowering the lifeboat.

While they were all struggling in the water the skipper was heard to exclaim:

"Whatever will my poor wife and children do if I am drowned!"

In a moment one of the crew, who had managed to seize a lifebelt, took it off his own body and pushed it toward his captain.

"Here, skipper," he said, "take this. I have no wife or child; no one will suffer if I am lost."

"It will keep us both up," answered the skipper, putting his arm around the buoy, and bidding the brave fellow do the same; "or if it does not we will share the same fate."

Both these men were saved, as happily another trawler came by while they were still able to keep above water; but none the less had John Kingford been nobly ready to lay down his life for his friend.

One Solution of It.

They had been engaged only fifteen years, but it seemed a long time to her, and she was growing restless.

"Darling," she said, in gentle accents, "our betrothal has been very sweet, has it not?"

"It has, it has, indeed, my own."

"But it has been very long, don't you think?"

"Yes; it has been pretty middlin' long," he rejoined.

"I was thinking, dearest," she continued, playing with his watch and gazing down her eyes, "that our betrothal is nearly old enough to go out and work for a living. Couldn't we save it learn a trade, or get it a clerkship, or put it out at interest, or do something with it so that we might realize something on it? It has been hanging about home so long, burning gas and coal, and now it is nearly grown. It seems like a shame to have it doing nothing so long."

"What would you suggest?"

"We might get married."

"That's so. I never thought of that."—New York Telegraph.

The Charm of Life.

Love is the secret spring of life From which all blessings flow; It is the thought that teaches us The joy of life to know. It is the gift the angels left That by it we might climb Near to our Heavenly Father's heart, In blissful realms sublime. It lifts the soul up far above The sordid thoughts of life, And teaches us to live above Life's useless care and strife. It fills the heart with sunshine bright And brings such sweet content, We know it is the greatest gift God's angels ever sent.

Without it, man is but a brute; It is the spark divine That lights the human soul that it With wondrous light may shine. True love endures, immortal is, And happiness will bring; We even hear God's voice of love In little birds that sing. —Martha Shepard Lippincott, in Sunset Magazine.

Might Survive.

During the trying days of the civil war a young German, who had been trained in one of the famous "Cadeblen-schulen" (cadet or military schools) of his Fatherland, who had sought home and fortune in a newer land, offered his services to President Lincoln. The latter, sorely in need of such men, gave the young foreigner a commission as captain and some good advice. As the interview was about ended, Herr von A. said: "And you must remember, Mr. President, my name is one of the oldest and most aristocratic in Germany."

The president looked at him a moment, then said:

"Well, if you are careful, it won't harm you any."

Her First Experience.

A small boy, aged 5, had a stepmother who was young and nervous. She had never had experience with children, and the small boy's slightest ailment tortured her into a panic.

Croup threatened one day, and the doctor was sent for in wild haste. As the doctor entered the room, the child raised his head from his pillow and croaked hoarsely, in apology for the hasty summons:

"You must excuse her, doctor; this is the first time she's ever been a mother."—Lippincott's Magazine.